

an initiative to protect and maximize the mobility and connectivity on a core set of highway corridors throughout North Carolina, while promoting environmental stewardship through maximizing the use of existing facilities to the extent possible, and fostering economic prosperity through the quick and efficient movement of people and goods.

The primary purpose of the SHC Vision Plan is to provide a network of high-speed, safe, reliable highways throughout North Carolina. The primary goal to support this purpose is to create a greater consensus towards the development of a genuine vision for each corridor – specifically towards the identification of a desired facility type (Freeway, Expressway, Boulevard, or Thoroughfare) for each corridor. Individual CTPs shall incorporate the long-term vision of each corridor. Refer to Appendix A for contact information for the SHC Vision Plan.

In the development of this plan, travel demand was projected from 2010 to 2035 using a trend line analysis based on Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) from 1990 to 2009. In addition, local land use plans and growth expectations were used to further refine future growth rates and patterns. NCDOT worked with the steering committee to develop growth rates. The established future growth rates were endorsed by the Swain County Commissioners and the Bryson City Town Council in November of 2011.

Existing and future travel demand is compared to existing roadway capacities. Capacity deficiencies occur when the traffic volume of a roadway exceeds the roadway's capacity. Roadways are considered near capacity when the traffic volume is at least eighty percent of the capacity. Refer to Figures 2 and 3 for existing and future capacity deficiencies.

Capacity is the maximum number of vehicles which have a “reasonable expectation” of passing over a given section of roadway, during a given time period under prevailing roadway and traffic conditions. Many factors contribute to the capacity of a roadway including the following:

- Geometry of the road (including number of lanes), horizontal and vertical alignment, and proximity of perceived obstructions to safe travel along the road;
- Typical users of the road, such as commuters, recreational travelers, and truck traffic;
- Access control, including streets and driveways, or lack thereof, along the roadway;
- Development along the road, including residential, commercial, agricultural, and industrial developments;
- Number of traffic signals along the route;
- Peaking characteristics of the traffic on the road;
- Characteristics of side-roads feeding into the road; and